

# LATIN NOTES

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## A SYMPOSIUM ON COÖRDINATION BETWEEN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

### Opinions of Latin Teachers

It is generally conceded that the fundamental reason for the existence of junior high schools is to help pupils find themselves. It is their responsibility to discover low average and border line pupils and direct them into the more vocational types of training; also to make more extensive provision for capitalizing the abilities of superior or gifted children.

In some junior high schools no exploratory course in foreign languages is offered. In others, such a course is given in the 8B grade or earlier, so that the pupils may be supplied with interesting and valuable information about Latin. This should prove worth while whether they continue the subject beyond ten weeks or a term. Enough linguistic material may be offered to enable the teacher to determine which pupils may pursue the subject with success and profit. While realia and historical-cultural material are important and serve to motivate interest, after a sufficient period has been devoted to exploratory work, the emphasis should be on language study. The Latin Club affords an opportunity to supplement the work on topics relating to Roman life.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that junior high school pupils must often meet on an equal footing, as far as linguistic preparation is concerned, third-term pupils who have done their first-year's work in senior high school. To accomplish this, the junior high school would need to devote one full year to serious language study with only that historical-cultural material which bears directly on the content of 9A and 9B work. As the pupils are immature and as the acquisition of a difficult language like Latin is a slow, careful process, rapid advancement is inadvisable. Classes are generally admitted to be too large in junior high school to offer proper instruction to pupils, particularly in foreign languages.

The fact that junior high school pupils in many instances are not so capable of sustaining themselves in the linguistic aspects of third-term work as those who have successfully begun the foreign language in the senior high school tends to confirm the notion that instruction in the linguistic phases is less effective in the junior high schools. It is, therefore, highly desirable that Latin instruction in the junior high schools be in the hands of carefully trained teachers. In many localities the better teachers in junior high

schools seek senior high school positions as soon as possible. This situation would probably be remedied if the salary schedule of both groups of teachers were the same. This would be wise economy, as Latin pupils are made or broken in accordance with the effectiveness of first-year instruction. It is essential that pupils spend that formative period with the most skillful teachers available.

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Perhaps one source of difficulty is the fact that different texts are used in the junior and senior high schools of the same city. But that should be made a source of strength, not of weakness, by means of constant comparisons drawn by a third-term teacher. Sometimes the junior high school pupils have not had sufficient drill in fundamentals, since they begin rather young, often with as few as three periods a week in the first term.

As a junior high school teacher, I feel that my pupils must go to their third term with a thorough knowledge of the required syntax, vocabulary, and forms. They should not, however, be expected to use the ablative absolute, even if they find themselves in a class that learned this form in the second term of senior high school. But they need to know the perfect passive participle of all the verbs in the first-year list. A little patience ought to be shown in helping the pupils adjust themselves to their new environment, as the junior high school pupils from the rapid classes are usually a year younger than the average senior high school pupils. They need also continued drill in elementary forms.

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The senior high school teacher should have at least a year's experience in the junior high school classroom. She would then begin to realize what it means to teach Latin to younger pupils who may never go to college or even to high school, but who deserve to receive some return from their study of Latin apart from a preparation to enter a second-year class in senior high school.

It is desirable to begin Latin in the eighth grade and continue it five days a week as a first-year subject throughout this year and the next. The textbook should be suited to the age and aptitudes of the pupils and the subject matter based upon Roman themes, with just enough "conscious transfer" to aid the pupils in forming the habit of connecting Latin with the world about them. After two such years with an able

teacher who knows that the test of her success is the willingness of the pupils to exert maximum effort, they should have no difficulty in keeping up with the work of the tenth grade.

The so-called "exploratory course" should not take the place of such a two-year course as that suggested above but should form an introduction to it. Those pupils who prove to be extremely weak may be permitted to drop Latin at the end of the exploratory course, with the feeling, however, that they have been repaid for their work.

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It is gratifying to observe the progress being made toward coöperation between junior and senior high school teachers. Such a happy state has long seemed the *desideratum* for producing contented and well-taught Latin pupils. The word coöperation is used here because the personal element involved in the term is that which appears to be the greatest lack and the most crying need in the struggle to achieve the common objective—effective teaching and character development. Though other problems readily spring to mind, this one will be regarded as fundamental in this discussion.

Conditions existing in the junior high school that force me to this conclusion are:

1. Pupils who choose Latin as their first language are soon subjected to the gibe of studying a "dead" language.

2. Such pupils are frequently subjected to trivial tests by outsiders as to their ability to state ordinary daily transactions in Latin.

3. In view of the entirely valid movement in educational practice for the more frequent use of realia and visual aids to instruction, it must be admitted that the resources of Latin teachers in the junior high school are far more limited than those of the teachers of spoken languages.

4. The impressions of pupils based on conditions and circumstances attendant on their early lessons in language are powerful factors in determining their continuing interest and permanent attitude toward their study.

It can readily be deduced from the above statements that I consider the junior high school teacher's chief need to be in the extra-curricular phases of his work in developing the pupil as a Latin scholar. I shall not offer to maintain in this article that this view is the correct one. But I shall briefly recall to the reader's attention aspects of the Latin situation that support this contention.

1. The prevailing trend in all language instruction is toward the direct appeal to immediate interests. This implies that content and vocabulary should be drawn from life-situations that apply and appeal to the pupil.

2. Another tendency whose supporters are increasing in number is based on the investigations and conclusions of authorities on Reading, such as Thorndike and Gates. The method of language instruction should cause grammatical practice to arise from needs felt by the pupil as he encounters difficulties in reading carefully measured selections.

Such currents in pedagogic theory have made teaching practice so controversial a topic that it must be left for later consideration. The present junior high school syllabus, in my opinion, is constructed on principles that flatly oppose the first mentioned and necessarily render it insuperably difficult to follow the second. But it will more easily be conceded that the learning of Latin may be made more pleasurable,

with valuable concomitants in the form of enhanced culture and socialized behavior.

My remedies for the conditions I have stated as existing in the junior high school involve causing the pupils to feel themselves as part in the wider circles of cultured individuals, that exist beyond their limited view in their restricted neighborhoods. They should be brought into touch with other Latin pupils in junior and senior high schools through the media of inter-club communications, and joint excursions to appropriate places of interest. The material of interest, such as visual instruction material, should be made available to each group, either by sharing use and maintenance or by other desirable forms of coöperation. Such activities can be made the basis for repelling or rendering innocuous the covert sneers of the ignorant outsider who demands "practical results."

But all the procedures mentioned cannot even reach the stage of organization, not to say functioning, without the personal meeting, friendly acquaintance, discussion and collaboration in a spirit of coöperative service toward the pupils, that befits the Latin teachers of our educational system.

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As teachers we all need to work together with a sympathetic and coöperative spirit. It often seems that junior high school teachers are expected to accomplish superhuman feats. Usually the classes are too large; many pupils should be in a trade school; the teachers frequently need to spend more time on discipline than on subject matter; and in some cases a teacher whose subject is Mathematics or History is assigned to teach Latin. Perhaps too much ground is covered in the senior high school, and the work might well be planned in conjunction with the teachers of the junior high school. But we believe that most of the pupils can accomplish the work well, especially if there is some basis for selection.

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Visits between junior and senior high school teachers, with occasional conferences, and possibly a regular bulletin forming part of LATIN NOTES, would aid in keeping the two groups in constant and sympathetic touch with each other.

#### As An Administrator Sees It

Many of the practical difficulties which confront the administrative or supervising officer in a school system operating under the 6-3-3 system arise from what seems to be an inevitable conflict between the ideas and ideals held by the teachers in the two types of school. The typical senior high school teacher is likely to hold the ideas, cherish the ideals, and try to maintain the standards of the traditional college preparatory school. The typical junior high school teacher is likely to talk about "educating the whole child," and otherwise to cherish the ideals of general education which the junior high school has in common with the elementary school. This conflict of ideals is especially apparent in the case of teachers of Latin, a subject which has so long been regarded as a college preparatory subject and has traditionally had its content and method strongly influenced, if not prescribed, by the college. The senior high school teacher of Latin, therefore, is quite likely to think in terms of the traditional course of study and to direct most of his efforts toward those types of efficiency demanded by the College Entrance Examination Board or similar standardizing agencies. The junior high school teacher, being farther removed from such standardizing in-



fluences and realizing that only a small number of his pupils will ever be subjected to standards and tests of this sort, quite naturally places his major emphasis upon the here-and-now values to be gained from the study of Latin; his aim is to correlate the work with that of other subjects which the pupil is taking at the time, and to set up only such standards of attainment as he thinks reasonable.

How can these opposing points of view be reconciled or at any rate brought into a working relation with each other? That is the problem in many school systems today. Failure to solve this problem has in the past wrecked or weakened many Latin departments and done grave injustice to the pupils in many more. Joint committees representing the two groups have in some school systems been able to work out a more or less successful *modus vivendi et operandi* in the form of a course of study covering the work of the two schools. Having served more than once as referee at such a struggle, I have sometimes felt that it would be a great help to mutual understanding of the ideas and ideals of the contending parties, if every candidate for a position in a senior high school were forced to serve an apprenticeship in the junior high school and *vice versa*. Such a plan would help, at any rate, to decrease the frequency of the charge so often made today by the senior high school teacher that the junior teacher "doesn't know any Latin," and the retort from the junior high school teacher that the senior teacher "doesn't know children!" Meanwhile administrative officers should make sure that they themselves are not furnishing opportunities for criticisms of this sort by insisting upon as high a standard of scholarship qualification in the junior high school staff as in the senior high school staff, and by seeing to it that the pupils in both junior and senior high schools are held to a standard which is reasonable, and that the tests employed are in scope and difficulty such as meet the approval of the teachers in both types of schools.

#### EXCERPTS FROM THE SUMMARY OF REPORTS ON THE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The following excerpts were contributed by Miss Mildred Dean, Head of Department of Latin, Washington, D. C., and will be found of great interest to teachers of Latin. The excerpts are taken from *A Summary of Reports on the Modern Foreign Languages* compiled by Robert Herndon Fife, Chairman of the Modern Foreign Language Study. This publication may be secured from The Macmillan Company.

p. 20. The order of popularity puts Latin first, with over twenty-three per cent of the total [public] school enrollment, and then arranges the modern languages in the following sequence: French (13.6 per cent), Spanish (9.6 per cent), German (1.2 per cent), followed by Italian and a group composed of Greek, Hebrew, Bohemian, Swedish and Norse, which altogether make up less than one per cent of the total modern language enrollment.

p. 21. With the exception of the junior high schools . . . the modern foreign language enrollment increases regularly as we pass from the smaller to the larger towns. . . with Latin the ratios develop in an exactly opposite direction and we march into ever decreasing percentages to the total school enrollment when we pass from the smaller towns to those over 30,000 inhabitants. The largest proportional Latin enrollment is found in the rural communities.

p. 24. The Latin enrollment. . . draws more heavily from the school population in the first and second years of regular high school study, the ninth and tenth grades. . . For Latin is evidently a great obstacle to an early beginning of modern languages, even in those areas where French is most popular.

p. 49. The one conclusion which emerges with great insistence is. . . that under fair teaching conditions the achievement of pupils reflects directly the emphasis which the teacher lays upon the objectives that he seeks. No worthwhile ability in the modern languages develops as a by-product, but only as a result of concentration by the teacher upon it as a goal to be sought with earnest endeavor.

p. 149. We see how putting the reading objective in the foreground of instruction stimulates the rapid development of the power to read with comprehension as compared with the time-honored intensive methods of introducing the student to the foreign language through grammatical analysis.

p. 164-165. The Classical Committee put this objective (the development of increased power to use the English language correctly) into the foreground from the beginning of its investigation and administered hundreds of thousands of tests throughout the country in 1922-23 and established experimental classes to determine whether the study of Latin develops a better command of useful abilities in English. So well satisfied were they with the positive results derived from these tests that this aim was put first in the final statement of valid objectives of Latin study and numerous suggestions and devices are included in the report of the Classical Investigation for promoting such transfer values.

p. 169. At each of these levels of intelligence, low, median and high, the gains of the beginning Latin group are greater than those of the no-language group and of the beginning French group. Apparently a difference in mental ability has no vital influence in determining the amount of gain in English vocabulary.

p. 176. The Classical Investigation had already faced this subject (cultural material in modern language texts) and had administered tests to determine the comparative knowledge of classical history of students of Latin and of non-Latin students. They had also sought to measure the amount of classical material which occurs in high school English courses and in popular English reading. These tests afforded valuable information but they did not go far enough.

p. 206-7. The beginning of improvement lies in the willingness of modern language teachers to face the present situation realistically. This is particularly necessary as regards the lack of present standards for the organization of classes and the measurement of achievement, the two-year course and its implications and the unsatisfactory results which come from the failure to concentrate on attainable objectives. As soon as we look at things in this way, the means of bettering them suggest themselves as matters of course: the selection of attainable objectives and the concentration of class activities on these; experimentation with methods and curriculum material that is best adapted for attaining these objectives and testing and retesting for the selection and classification of pupils, for reorientation in method and materials and for individual diagnosis. These are fields of experiment and effort which demand the best that the modern language teacher can contribute and even then success will not be attained unless he has likewise the coöperation of the administrator and the educational psychologist.

## THE NEW YORK CLASSICAL CLUB

The first meeting of the New York Classical Club will be held November 5, 10:30 A.M., at the Casa Italiana, Columbia University, Amsterdam Avenue and 117th Street. Professor T. Leslie Shear, Princeton University, Director of the excavation of the Agora at Athens, will give an illustrated lecture on "The Discoveries in the Athenian Agora." The luncheon following will be at the Men's Faculty Club, 117th Street and Morningside Drive.

Anyone interested is invited to attend the meeting. Tickets to the luncheon may be obtained for \$1.10 from the Secretary-Treasurer of the Club, Professor E. Adelaide Hahn, Hunter College.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The little pamphlet, *Idioms in Caesar and Cicero*, which formerly appeared as item number 162 in the Service Bureau Leaflets, has been expanded into a booklet with exercises on the text. The title of the new booklet is *Latin Exercises*. It may be secured for 30 cents plus postage from the Service Bureau or from the author, Harry E. Wedeck, 879 East 37th Street, Brooklyn, New York.

*Humour in Varro and Other Essays*, by Harry E. Wedeck, published by Basil Blackwell, Oxford, England, has been reduced in price and is now available from the Service Bureau for \$1.00. This little volume contains eleven essays on different subjects of interest to teachers of Latin; of special appeal would be those entitled "Agriculture and Country-Life in Latin Literature," "Affection for Children Among the Romans," and "The Treatment of Epithet and Simile in Homer, Vergil, and Statius." The book also contains a Latin version of two stories by Edgar Allen Poe.

*Murder at Larinum* is the rather arresting title of the new supplementary reader for the Cicero year which presents the narrative portions of Cicero's speech *Pro Cluentio*. The little volume contains, in addition to the text, an introduction covering the history of the case, notes, and a vocabulary. It may be secured from The Macmillan Company, New York, N. Y., for 64 cents.

*Julius Caesar*, by John Buchan, is the latest biography of the founder of the Roman Empire. It stresses not so much the military glory as the political achievements of this great leader. The publisher is D. Appleton and Company, New York, N. Y., and the price \$2.00.

Teachers who have used M. A. Hamilton's *Junior History of Rome* with their classes will welcome this author's newest book, entitled *Rome—A Short History*. This attractive volume, printed in large type and profusely illustrated, is sold by the Oxford University Press, New York, N. Y., for 85 cents.

A recent publication which will be of interest to teachers of Greek is T. R. Glover's *Greek Byways*, wherein this scholarly author calls attention to many things in the life and society of ancient Greece not stressed in the usual histories. The book may be obtained from The Macmillan Company, New York, N. Y., for \$1.00.

The Service Bureau now has on hand an article, reprinted from The Classical Bulletin, a periodical

published at St. Louis University. This is entitled "The Sixth Book of the *Aeneid*—An Appreciation," and treats this book from a triple viewpoint—its function in the scheme of the *Aeneid*, its structure as an artistic unit, and its beauty of style, diction, rhythm, and atmosphere. This reprint is available from the Service Bureau for 15 cents plus postage.

A certain quantity of material in the Service Bureau has been damaged by water and will be sold at reduced prices. This material includes some of the best Bulletins published within the last few years. The titles and prices follow:

Title	Slightly Damaged	Badly Damaged
Latin Notes Supplement IX—Latin Grammar Speaks.....	\$ .12	\$.05
Bulletin IV—English Poems Dealing with Classical Mythology.....	.12	.05
Bulletin XIII—Latin in the Junior High School.....	.50	.25
Bulletin XV—Vergilian Papers.....	.10	.05
Bulletin XVIII—A Journey Through the Lower World.....	.10	—
Bulletin XIX—Cruising with Aeneas	.25	.12
Bulletin XX—Pictures from Old Editions of Vergil's Works.....	.25	.12
Bulletin XXI—Virgil and Tennyson	.10	—
Bulletin XXII—The Vergilian Cruise of 1930.....	.10	.05
Bulletin XXIV—The Writing on the Wall.....	.22	.10
Bulletin XXVI— <i>Fortuna Belli</i> .....	.15	.08

## SERVICE BUREAU MATERIAL AVAILABLE

This material appears in mimeographed or printed form. In the case of the former, the items may be borrowed with the understanding that the teacher pays the postage and returns the material within two weeks after its receipt, or they may be purchased for 5 cents each unless another price is stated. Printed items, however, known as LATIN NOTES SUPPLEMENTS and BULLETINS, are not sent out as loans but must be purchased at the prices indicated. The material is listed in Leaflets published at the end of each school year, and containing a summary of items which have been announced in the LATIN NOTES for the year. These leaflets are sent out free of charge.

### I. In Mimeographed Form

(Numbering is continued from the October issue.)

437. An Examination for the Vergil Class. By Claire C. Thursby, University High School, Oakland, California.
438. A Short Bibliography of Historical Novels Suitable for High School Latin Pupils. By Marguerite Kretschmer, Service Bureau for Classical Teachers.

### II. Latin Notes Supplements

Fifty-one Supplements are ready for circulation. For titles and prices, see Leaflets I-VIII.

### III. Bulletins

- XXVII. Bibliography of Greek Myth in English Poetry. By Helen H. Law, Wellesley College, Wellesley, Mass. Price \$1.00.

For titles and prices of previous Bulletins, see Leaflets I-VIII.

### IV. Pictures

For 314 prints, classified by sets, see Leaflets VII and VIII. Price of prints, 5 cents each. Discounts for quantities.

### V. Wall Posters

Two posters for the bulletin board. For titles and prices, see Leaflet VIII.